

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY INT;USGS/G ERICKSEN

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TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

UNCLAS STATE 141509

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, EMIN, BL

SUBJECT: LITHIUM STUDY OF SALAR DE UYUNI

1. JOHN REINEMUND, CHIEF, OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGY, AND GEORGE ERICKSEN PLAN TO VISIT BOLIVIA IN LATE JULY, 1977, SUBJECT TO EMBASSY APPROVAL, TO DISCUSS FUTURE COOPERATIVE WORK IN THE INVESTIGATION OF LITHIUM-RICH BRINES. TENTATIVELY PLAN TO SPEND JULY 25-27 IN LA PAZ, ARRIVING JULY 24. WILL GEOBOL PERSONNEL BE AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS AT THIS TIME? VISIT WILL BE MADE AT NO COST TO EMBASSY OR GOB.

2. ERICKSEN HAS WRITTEN TO FERNANDEZ, DIRECTOR, GEOBOL, RECOMMENDING CONTINUED USGS COLLABORATION IN INVESTIGATION OF SALARS OF SOUTHWESTERN BOLIVIA, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE: (1) COMPLETE SAMPLING OF BRINE IN SALAR DE UYUNI--NEAR-SURFACE SAMPLING AND SAMPLING OF BRINES DEEPER IN THE SALT CRUST AND UNDERLYING SEDIMENTS--TO DETERMINE HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL DISTRIBUTION OF LITHIUM- AND UNCLASSIFIED

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POTASSIUM-RICH BRINES; THE SAMPLING PROGRAM SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO FURNISH GOB WITH THE BASIC INFORMATION IT NEEDS TO NEGOTIATE A COMPANY CONTRACT FOR EXPLOITATION OF

THE BRINES IN THIS SALAR; (2) COMPLETE RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY OF BRINES IN SALAR DE COIJASA AND SALAR DE EMPEXA; (3) INVESTIGATE SALINE RESOURCES IN OTHER SALARS OF

SOUTHWESTERN BOLIVIA. ALSO, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, GEOBOL SHOULD ORGANIZE A LABORATORY CAPABLE OF ANALYZING WATER AND BRINE. THIS INCLUDES PLANNING OF LABORATORY FACILITIES, SELECTION AND PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT, AND TRAINING OF CHEMISTS.

3. USGS HAS PAID ALL COSTS RELATIVE TO VISIT TO BOLIVIA BY VINE AND ERICKSEN, SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1976. SUGGEST THAT DOLLARS ,5,000 IN 14 FT 800 BE RETAINED IN EMBASSY TO FINANCE ADDITIONAL USGS WORK IN BOLIVIA THIS FALL.

4. SHIRLEY RETTIG MAY PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE WORK IN BOLIVIA, PRINCIPALLY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ANALYTICAL LABORATORY. DEPENDING UPON REQUESTS OF GOB, SHE MAY VISIT BOLIVIA IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER. SHE WILL HAVE THE NECESSARY MEDICAL CLEARANCES FOR SUCH A VISIT.

5. RETTIG HAS WRITTEN TO FERNANDEZ ABOUT COLLECTION OF WATER SAMPLES FROM THE DESAGUADERO. VANCE

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